

CITY OF COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

CITIZEN'S POLICE REVIEW BOARD

COMMUNITY OUTREACH STRATEGY

In order for the Columbia Citizens Police Review Board to accomplish its outreach goals, there must be an open and honest exchange with the population that the board services. The highest levels of ethics and integrity must be maintained and exemplified not only by the board, but also by everyone who plays a part in the complaint process.

The Board is committed to increasing its outreach activities with other governmental entities, state and local authorities, universities, community and civic organizations, neighborhood associations, civil rights groups, and outreach organizations. The Board will reach out and seek new ways to work with the entire community to achieve the Board's aims and goals.

Outreach is defined as two-way communication between the agency and the public at large to establish and foster mutual understanding, promote public involvement, and influence behaviors, attitudes and actions with the goal of improving the relationship between law enforcement and the community. Instituting this interactive connection with internal and external constituencies provides a reciprocal benefit that is essential to accomplishing the mission of the Citizens Police Review Board.

The Board has recognized the need to continuously work towards improving the community's understanding of the Board's mission, to increase its overall presence and visibility and to develop lasting partnerships. Improved communication will help the Board increase the level of trust and faith of the public it serves.

In fulfillment of its mission, the Board has pledged:

- To encourage members of the community to file complaints when they feel they have experienced police misconduct.
- To encourage active participation by all parties in the complaint process.
- To examine carefully each investigative file so as to ensure that all efforts have been made to resolve the complaint.
- To review all complaints with complete objectivity and impartiality.
- To respect and protect the rights of both the citizen and the subject officer.
- To engage in community outreach throughout Boone County Missouri to educate the general public and the Columbia Police Department concerning the Board's purpose.
- To report to the Columbia Chief of Police any patterns of misconduct that are uncovered as a result of investigations and complaint review.
- To report to the Columbia Chief of Police any and all relevant issue and policy matters that may arise.
- To proactively identify trends that may need to be addressed by the Columbia Chief of Police as it relates to officer training.

This broad-based outreach strategy is designed to ensure that Citizens Police Review Board is building relationships with the community and the Police Department, providing timely and accurate information to constituents, maintaining a clear and consistent message, and increasing visibility of the Board's profile, its role, and how its function benefits the community as a whole. Specific goals, objectives, strategies, and action items are clearly identified in the plan. Not all of the strategies will be implemented immediately and specific activities related to the identified strategies will be dependent upon available resource and Board priorities. In addition, this plan is a "living document" that will be reviewed and updated semi-annually.

STRATEGIC GOALS

PRIMARY GOAL

Function as a community resource for fair and impartial review of citizen complaints against the Columbia Police Department.

OBJECTIVES

Establish and maintain appropriate communications channels between the CPD and the CPRB.

Seek all needed information sources to ensure that the decision process is served.

Strive to render fair and impartial decisions based on the information and facts presented.

Look for opportunities to recommend improvements to policy and training for both CPD and CPRB.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- General public
- Civic groups/agencies
- Colleges/Universities
- Neighborhood associations
- Government entities

- Community groups
- Faith-based organizations
- Youth and youth organizations

STRATEGIES

- Maintain updated and accurate information on the Columbia Police and Citizens Police Review Board website
- Develop, update, and maintain fact sheets and brochures; establish networks for distribution
- Act as central distribution point for all complaint process resource materials
- Conduct speaking engagements
- Maintain a regular presence at community events
- Survey complainants to evaluate satisfaction with the complaint process; share finding with the Columbia Police Department on a consistent basis
- Prepare multilingual documents
- Establish regular media campaigns (print media, TV, radio, etc.)

SECONDARY GOAL

Improve public awareness, trust, and understanding of the Citizens Police Review Board's mission, goals, and accomplishments.

OBJECTIVES

Continue to develop Outreach Program to provide guidance and focus for outreach and communication efforts.

Develop and enhance communication tools

Improve constituent interactions with the complaint process

Increase public education program.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- General public
- Civic groups/agencies
- Colleges/Universities
- Neighborhood associations
- Government entities
- Community groups
- Faith-based organizations
- Youth and youth organizations

STRATEGIES

- Maintain updated and accurate information on the Columbia Police and Citizens Police Review Board website
- Develop, update, and maintain fact sheets and brochures; establish networks for distribution
- Develop and distribute press releases for events and major announcements
- Act as central distribution point for all complaint process resource materials
- Conduct speaking engagements
- Maintain a regular presence at community events
- Prepare multilingual documents
- Establish regular media campaigns (print media, TV, radio, etc.)

TERTIARY GOAL

Improve the relationship and bridge the gap between the Columbia Police Department and Boone County residents.

OBJECTIVES

- Maintain open communication to promote rapid response to issues
- Develop issue specific communication strategies
- Assist with the coordination of crisis communication efforts

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Chief of Police
- City Council
- Professional Standards
- CPD command staff

STRATEGIES

- Establish outreach roll-out plans
- Communicate early on identifiable personnel matters relating to employee misconduct
- Develop information sheets on actions taken
- Dialogue with constituencies on controversial issues (in-service training, recruits)
- Produce briefing documents and presentations

TRACKING OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The outreach program should accurately account of all outreach activities conducted. Everything should be documented. The CPRB will track the pertinent data relative to achieving the desired outcome, targeted audience, allocated resources, and contact persons. In most cases, this information should already be captured in individual outreach plans.

INITIATING EDUCATION EFFORTS

An important component of the outreach program includes conducting law enforcement and community-based education efforts. This can be used as an effective outreach and management tool to achieve the Board's mission, goals, and objectives relative to engendering trust in the complaint process. Through internal and external education, the Board may also be able to generate greater interest in information distribution by volunteers. In-service trainings, recruit trainings and participation in the Citizen's Police Academy is essential to this effort.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

The media can be an effective way for the CPRB to communicate priorities and accomplishments. Media outlets serve as an important resource that gets their information through press releases, articles, personal contact, etc. The Board Chair and/or Outreach Coordinator will determine the appropriate mode of communication.

On occasion, CPRB staff may be contacted by a reporter seeking information on specific programs or issues. All media inquiries should be directed to the attention of the Board Chair.